Attorney General Candidates Talk to the Bar

By Regina M. Parker

The five candidates running for Pennsylvania attorney general discussed their qualifications and ability to restore office morale and restructure operations at a Chancellor’s Forum hosted by the Philadelphia Bar Association on March 1. The Democratic candidates included Northampton County District Attorney John M. Morganelli, Montgomery County Board of Commissioners Chair Josh Shapiro and Allegheny County District Attorney Stephen Zappala. The Republican candidates included former federal prosecutor Joe Peters and Pennsylvania State Sen. John Rafferty.

Each candidate outlined his plan to improve morale in an agency plagued by recent scandals. Rafferty said he would tour all field offices and let employees know that if they do their job, follow directives and act ethically, “I will have their back.” Shapiro’s experience running the government in a heavily populated county gives him relevant executive experience, he said. He will recruit people who want to move forward in a positive direction. Zappala credited his familiarity with much of the agency’s workforce as an opportunity to lead by example and bring in top-notch professionals. As a former federal prosecutor and

Board Opposes ‘One-Size-Fits-All’ Amendments to Workers’ Compensation Act

By Thomas E. Rogers

The Board of Governors unanimously adopted a resolution on March 31 opposing House Bill 1800, which seeks to amend the Workers’ Compensation Act by fundamentally changing the delivery of medical treatment to Pennsylvania’s injured workers by imposing supposed evidence-based medical guidelines in an effort to control costs.

There have been no epidemiological studies demonstrating the validity of evidence-based treatment guidelines as outlined in HB 1800, or that such guidelines would enhance return-to-work outcomes. Evidence-based treatment guidelines may inform a physician’s care of a patient, but HB 1800 would make following such guidelines a requirement. The “one-size-fits-all” approach places injured workers at the risk of losing individualized treatment for their specific injuries and may reduce the number of medical providers willing to accept workers’ compensation patients for treatment.

The goal of cost control is counterproductive in that workers’ compensation rates in Pennsylvania have been decreasing since 2012. HB 1800 purports to give injured workers the ability to challenge the reasonableness or necessity of treatment, but Pennsylvania already sets forth well established procedures to request Utilization Review by employer, carrier and employee.

HB 1800 also would task the Secretary of Labor and Industry with appointing a panel of medical providers to review and propose modifications to the adopted guidelines. This appointment represents an unconstitutional delegation of legislative authority to a medical body in order to control costs.

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Sales Tax Rises From the Dead

By Gaetan J. Alfano

I frequently proclaim the importance and value of membership in the Philadelphia Bar Association.

This Association’s ongoing battle against the imposition of a sales tax on legal services in Pennsylvania is a perfect example of the value we deliver to our members.

Like the Flying Dutchman, the ghost ship of legend that is said to portend disaster, proposals for a sales tax on legal services keep materializing in the halls of the General Assembly.

In the current legislative session, Senate Bill 76 proposed to eliminate school property taxes in Pennsylvania and replace the lost revenue through increases in the personal income and sales taxes and an expansion of the sales tax to include many professional services. For the first time, most legal services would have been subject to a sales tax and law firms would have become sales tax collectors for the Commonwealth. Local law firms would have been at a competitive disadvantage over firms in neighboring states where a sales tax is not imposed on legal services.

The Philadelphia Bar Association lobbied hard to convince legislators to vote against the measure. In the end, SB 76 was defeated in the Senate by the narrowest of margins — a 24-24 tie vote that was broken by Lt. Gov. Mike Stack’s vote against the bill.

Despite the loss, supporters of SB 76 are adamant that they will reintroduce similar legislation in the next session. Recently, Sen. David Argall, the prime sponsor of SB 76, invited the Philadelphia Bar Association and other organizations that were vocal in their opposition to the bill to meet with him and other senators who supported the bill in Harrisburg to discuss their positions.

Association Treasurer Regina Foley, Executive Director Mark Tarasiewicz, Director of Public and Legal Services Charles Klimisch and Association lobbyist Anthony Crisci attended the meeting, along with 21 organizations representing banks, businesses, retailers, school boards and others opposed to SB 76. In addition to Sen. Argall, supporters of the bill who attended the meeting included Sens. Dinniman, Folmer, Scavello, Schwank and Wagner, and representatives from the Pennsylvania Coalition of Taxpayer Associations.

Regina spoke on behalf of the Association. “A sales tax on legal services would tax people at times of hardship, vulnerability and misfortune,” she stated. Contrary to the ideal of a sales tax being imposed on discretionary purchases, “The purchase of legal services is rarely a choice.”

“People seek legal services when they are facing eviction, have a problem on the job, are considering bankruptcy due to overwhelming medical bills, are senior citizens victimized by unscrupulous contractors or are retired and want to have a simple will prepared to memorialize their wishes,” Regina added.

“All of these essential services would have been subject to a sales tax under Senate Bill 76,” she said. “A sales tax on legal services would diminish access to justice for people in these and other difficult circumstances.”

In the above examples so well presented by my colleague, the burden on consumers is even worse when one considers that the business to business exemption from the proposed sales tax would result in that unscrupulous contractor paying no tax on a lawyer’s fee while the victimized senior citizen would be required to pay the sales tax.

In addition to the obvious competitive disadvantages for Pennsylvania law firms and the access to justice issues for consumers, there are plenty of other reasons to oppose a sales tax on legal services. Such a tax would jeopardize attorney-client privilege, as the provision of specific legal services to individual clients could be open to audit by the state.

Taxing legal services would be counterproductive, as the competitive disadvantages for Pennsylvania firms would result in a loss of jobs in this state, decreasing personal income tax revenues.

While the meeting in Harrisburg allowed the Philadelphia Bar Association to educate key senators in clear terms about the reasons for our opposition to a sales tax on legal services, we are under no illusion that this battle is over. We fully anticipate that in the next legislative session, the Flying Dutchman will return in the form of another bill that would impose a sales tax on our clients and place our members at a competitive disadvantage.

There is strength in membership. As the largest metropolitan bar association in Pennsylvania, the Philadelphia Bar Association is uniquely positioned to voice the concerns of the legal community over legislation such as SB 76 that impacts our profession and the clients we serve.

We will continue to work diligently on behalf of our members to force any attempt to impose a sales tax on legal services back out to sea.

Gaetan J. Alfano (GJA@Pietragallo.com), partner at Pietragallo Gordon Alfano Boisich & Rapsanti, LLP, is Chancellor of the Philadelphia Bar Association.
Consideration Needed for Young Lawyer Financial Status

By Erin E. Lamb

Young lawyers are being positioned as the next great philanthropists. The ubiquity of our city’s “young friends/young professionals” organizations certainly speaks to that. But young friends organizations have sprung up for another, simpler reason: we cannot afford a full-priced ticket to your ball/gala/fundraiser/auction. The only way to attract us is with a discounted ticket and a full-court press to sell the heart and soul of the organization. The organizations that are adjusting to this reality will survive. The ones that do not, will not. I consider myself an active champion of legal services and civic institutions, and I am deeply anxious about the future of these organizations.

The largest, most diverse generation in the U.S., millennials, will be the most indebted generation in America history, surpassing the one before it, Generation X. Eighty-six percent of millennials (the oldest of whom are 35 years old) carry debt. You may be reading this thinking that at 35 years old, you, too, had that level of debt. You bought a house and you financed it with a mortgage, maybe you had some student loans and possibly a car payment. Much of that is “good” debt made up of affordable loans that put the old hallmarks of American adulthood, plus a guarantee you would do better than the generation before you, in reach.

Many millennials are not carrying “good” debt, putting them in a position destined to be worse off than the generation before us. The bulk of our debt is wrapped up in student loans to pay for bloated tuitions for the college degrees that are now necessary for even basic job positions. Often these jobs come with salaries that cannot possibly pay off our student loans. For those of us who went to law school, the same is true times two. The young lawyer who may not able to rely on older family members for financial help is at even more risk and is even more vulnerable.

Even “lucky” young lawyers with “big law” salaries have student loan debt that is often in the hundreds of thousands. Their monthly loan payment is comparable to that of your first house’s mortgage payment, maybe even your current one. Also, payments on government-issued loans are tied to your salary, so that the lawyer paying $250 a month as a city law clerk will find himself or herself paying double or triple in the event their salary does the same.

Please do not dismiss the anxieties of millennials, especially if you are a member of a generation memorably christened “The Me Generation.” If you catch yourself saying that a ticket, donation or auction item is “just” $250, stop yourself, even if you secretly still believe it. Just as your parents marveled that you ended up in charge, so will you marvel when we inevitably end up there, too. You will catch more flies with honey than vinegar.

The first step in dealing with this debt crisis, that will affect us all, is to acknowledge its existence.

Erin E. Lamb (elamb@nauke.com), associate at Raule & Henderson LLP, is chair of the Young Lawyers Division.

Bar Academy Visits the Library Company of Philadelphia

By Hon. A. Michael Snyder (ret.)

One of the key missions of the Philadelphia Bar Association Bar Academy is to introduce lawyers and judges to unique institutions in and around Philadelphia. On March 2, approximately 50 guests had an opportunity to learn about one of the oldest and most unique institutions in Philadelphia, the Library Company of Philadelphia.

Founded by Benjamin Franklin in 1731, the Library Company of Philadelphia is the nation’s oldest lending library, operated continuously since its inception as a subscription library supported by its shareholders. The Library Company was created to allow the members of Franklin’s coterie of men of intellectual curiosity, called the “Junta,” access to books that they could not have afforded individually. The books were purchased by the funds put up by the subscribers, who became shareholders.

Over the years, the Library Company has become a resource for research into the mores of American society and culture from the 17th to the 19th century. Many of the materials are not available elsewhere; the materials are available to the public without charge on a non-circulating basis.

Part of what makes the Library Company so unique is that the number of shareholders has been constant since the 18th century. To become a shareholder now, one has to take a share that was previously held by another. At present, a share can be purchased for $200, with annual dues of $100 per year thereafter.

A particular greeting card custom in 19th century America, represented in the images collection of the Library Company, was the custom of sending a form of “anti-Valentine” that advised the recipient of all the things that they did that were neither praiseworthy nor beloved. It is fairly safe to say that none of these messages made for a “Hallmark moment.” Imagine being sent a card that told you how truly loathsome you are.

At the time of the Bar Academy’s visit, a fascinating exhibit was on display presenting the history of fashion, both through manufacturing and retailing, in Philadelphia. Indeed, Philadelphia was known as “the Paris of the U.S.” for its leadership in fashion design, manufacturing and retailing. Well into the 20th century Philadelphia industries clothed men, women and children. Images on display, combined with rare artifacts, brought this incredible history to life for visitors.

African-American history is also well represented in the Library Company’s holdings. Scholarship related to the abolitionist movement, from political, economic and religious perspectives has been researched and catalogued at the Library Company.

In a day where we receive so much of our information digitally, it is a pleasure to visit an institution that pays homage to the printed word and image. The Library Company is a remarkable historical gem that continues to serve the public in the way that Benjamin Franklin intended: for the advancement and encouragement of intellectual curiosity through a study of American history and culture.

Hon. A. Michael Snyder (ret.) (msnyder@adr41.com), distinguished neutral at the Dispute Resolution Institute, is chair of the Bar Academy.
What Can Be Learned from Experienced Consumers of ADR
4/4/16 - 12 - 1 p.m. (1 SUB)
Experienced “consumers” of Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) will explain what cases are appropriate for ADR and what cases should be litigated. This CLE program will highlight what type of ADR (mediation, arbitration, summary jury trial) is best for what type of dispute; as well as how to pick a mediator or arbitrator (pick individuals, go to services, etc.). Finally, the discussion will answer the question, “does ADR work to keep costs down?” This program will help mediators and arbitrators identify what practices/habits they employ that (a) please or (b) displease their clients.

Introduction to the Mindful Practice of Law
4/5/16 - 8:30 - 9:30 a.m. (1 ETH)
Alternate venue - held at Duane Morris, LLP
Join for the first program in the Business Law Section Mindfulness Series. This CLE program is the introduction to “Mindfulness” in practice that promotes more effective, sustainable work relationships that can positively impact your relationship with your clients, as well as the outcome of your case. Learn what the concept of mindfulness is, how it can be practiced, how it varies and how it affects a lawyer’s duty of legal representation.

Compensation Issues for Portfolio Companies, Start-Ups and Other Entrepreneurial Organizations
4/7/16 - 12:30 - 1:30 p.m. (1 SUB)
This CLE program will include a discussion of various compensation models used by portfolio companies, start-ups and other entrepreneurial organizations. Topics to be highlighted include: key components of typical reward packages; tax, accounting and valuation issues associated with each type of reward; other advantages and disadvantages of these types of rewards; how they work together to achieve the organization’s compensation goals; factors that influence these goals; as well as how entrepreneurial practices differ from broader market practices.

ABA LEAD LAW and the Philadelphia Bar Association present a leadership-focused two-part CLE series
4/12/16 - 12 - 1 p.m. (3 SUB)
ABA LEAD LAW is built on a belief that leadership is the foundation in every role a lawyer serves in professional life. Created to bring together the top minds and leaders in the legal industry, this is an opportunity for lawyers to participate in a leader development experience designed specifically to equip them with new perspectives and practical tools in the area of lawyer leadership.

ABA Lead Law (Pt. 1): Lead Yourself - Lead Your Clients (video)
4/12/16 - 9 a.m. - 12 p.m. (3 SUB)
Experienced faculty will examine what “leadership” is, and why it is so important for lawyers to be skilled in managing relationships, influencing subordinates, colleagues and leaders in the firm, as well as clients and others outside the firm.

ABA Lead Law (Pt. 2): Lead Your Firm - Lead Your Community (video)
4/12/16 - 12:30 - 3:30 p.m. (3 SUB)
Experienced faculty will examine leading through conflict and crisis, a normal part of life for a lawyer leader. In addition to taking steps to avoid crisis, the lawyer leader must know how to respond to and grow through conflict and crisis. The program will highlight effective leadership of a practice group or client project.

The Ins and Outs of the Pennsylvania Mechanics’ Lien Law
4/18/16 - 3:00 - 5:15 p.m. (2 SUB)
Happily hour immediately following sponsored by Rimkus Consulting Group, Inc. This CLE, hosted by the Construction Law Committee, provides a practical overview of the Mechanics’ Lien Law as it relates to commercial and residential projects, as well as leasehold interests. The presentation discusses the benefits of properly filed Mechanics’ Lien, as well as the pitfalls commonly faced by clients and lawyers in perfecting a Mechanics’ Lien on commercial, residential and leasehold interests.

Business Immigration 101
4/19/16 - 12:30 - 1:30 p.m. (1 SUB)
Mystified at how immigration law applies to your business clients? Co-presented with Greenberg Traurig, LLP, this new introductory seminar addresses the ins and outs of the immigration processes as they relate to businesses, including compliance requirements applicable to all employers.

Bridge the Gap
4/20/16 - 12 - 4:15 p.m. (4 ETH) - Registration closed for this date.
4/30/16 - 9 a.m. - 1:15 p.m. (4 ETH) - Seats remain available
The Bridge the Gap program is intended to give all newly admitted Pennsylvania lawyers the “know-how” that is otherwise learned through trial and error. The Supreme Court of Pennsylvania approved a rule change requiring newly admitted lawyers to complete the Bridge the Gap program by their first CLE compliance deadline. This program focuses on key issues of ethics and professionalism that are essential for all lawyers admitted to practice law.

Voting Rights: Where We Came From and Where We Are Going
4/22/16 - 12 - 1 p.m. (1 SUB)
The right to vote is core to the nation’s democratic process. From poll taxes and voter ID requirements to the Fifteenth Amendment granting suffrage to African-Americans and the Voting Rights Act of 1965, the law has both restricted and expanded people’s rights and ability to vote. In light of the upcoming election, join a group of panelists on a discussion of past, present and possible future voting rights issues locally and nationally, including the Voting Rights Act, Voter ID and felon disenfranchisement.

Technology Issues for Small and Midsize Law Firms
4/26/16 - 12:30 - 2:30 p.m. (1 SUB/1 ETH)
For the solo practitioner, small, or midsize law firm, technology issues and upgrades always seem to be on the “to do” list, but never seem to get top billing. Recent developments have demonstrated that every lawyer must be aware of the benefits and pitfalls of the technology they and their clients regularly use. Join a panel of lawyers, technology insiders and seasoned insurance professionals as they discuss what every lawyer should be considering when addressing technology and data issues, both internally and for clients.

Lateral Moves: Ethical and Legal Consequences of Changing Law Firms
4/27/16 - 12 - 2:15 p.m. (2 ETH)
First FREE CLE for Philadelphia Bar Association Members in good standing. Join for a two-hour in depth discussion of the legal and ethical obligations relating to lateral mobility and firm growth. This CLE program will address current ethics opinions on point, the relevant Pennsylvania Rules of Professional Conduct, the latest case law and best practices for the moving lawyers and their future and former law firms.

The MAKING OF A MURDERER: Juveniles, Their Brain Function and Interrogation Methods
4/29/16 - 2 - 4:15 p.m. (2 SUB)
Includes wine and cheese happy hour
Would an innocent 16-year-old really confess to a crime he did not commit? Ripped from the headlines of the New York Times, Wall Street Journal and People Magazine, the Netflix documentary series, “Making A Murderer” has been the talk of the legal community, as well as traditional pop culture circles and social media across the country. Join in a two-hour in-depth analysis of this docuseries examining interrogation methods of juveniles and their brain function.

TO REGISTER Visit the CLE page at PhiladelphiaBar.org

For questions regarding Philadelphia Bar Association CLE, contact Director of Continuing Legal Education Tara D. Phoenix at 215-238-6349 or tphoenix@philabar.org.
Sustaining Success for Women Lawyers

By Annie Kernicky

The U.S. Supreme Court has made new developments in the area of juvenile justice, recently ruling that its 2012 decision banning mandatory life-without-parole sentences for juveniles convicted of murder must be applied retroactively. This important decision granted a new opportunity to release inmates serving life sentences without the possibility of parole for murders they committed in their youth.

Marsha L. Levick, deputy director, chief counsel and co-founder of the Juvenile Law Center, spoke at the Women in the Profession Committee Meeting on Feb. 23 to discuss the recent Montgomery v. Louisiana decision, as well as other pressing issues impacting public interest lawyers, particularly in the area of juvenile justice. Not only has the litigation path for children’s rights changed tremendously in the last decade, Levick explained, but it has travelled a similar course to that of women’s rights, as it has moved from a protective environment to an equal rights framework. Levick opined that the Supreme Court has delivered a “gift” to the children’s legal community, by identifying ways that children are different than adults, enabling children’s litigation and advocacy to grow.

The Montgomery v. Louisiana decision followed a series of others in the 2000s concerning penalties and sentencing of juveniles. In 2005, the Supreme Court eliminated the juvenile death penalty. According to Levick, the Supreme Court used research to inform the decision, and has continued to rely on that data. In 2010, the Supreme Court ruled that sentencing juvenile offenders to life without the possibility of parole was also unconstitutional, but only for non-homicide crimes. Levick noted that Justice Kennedy authored the opinions and specifically discussed a denial of hope when juveniles are involved.

The next year, in 2011, in a decision that Levick believes will have a far more significant impact on the future, the Supreme Court ruled that a juvenile’s age is relevant to the Miranda custody analysis under the Fifth Amendment. Levick explained that the J.D.B. v. North Carolina decision is influential because the Supreme Court moved beyond the sentencing arena, and expanded to other arenas where children encounter the law. The 2012 Miller v. Alabama decision came next, where the Supreme Court ruled that automatic life sentences for juvenile offenders violated the Eighth Amendment’s ban on cruel and unusual punishment, leading to the most recent retroactivity determination. According to Levick, Justice Kennedy’s Montgomery decision

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WORKERS’ COMPENSATION SECTION

Hampton Award Luncheon April 15

Pennsylvania Secretary of State, Hon. Pedro Cortés, will be the keynote speaker at the Workers’ Compensation Section Martha Hampton Award Luncheon on Friday, April 15. Judge Cortés was nominated by Gov. Tom Wolf on January 20, 2015 and confirmed by the Pennsylvania Senate on June 2, 2015. He previously served as Secretary of the Commonwealth from 2003 to 2010. At that time, Judge Cortés was the first confirmed Latino Cabinet member and the longest serving Secretary of State in Pennsylvania history.

The Section is pleased to present the 2016 Martha Hampton Award to Jason Krasno, partner at Krasno, Krasno and Onwudinjo. Krasno has focused his practice on representing injured workers for the past 17 years and has distinguished himself by demonstrating extraordinary professionalism and exceptional advocacy. He is well-known for his charitable contributions to causes involving children, animal welfare and fighting cancer. His commitment to civility and integrity in the practice of law and in his personal interactions has earned him the deep respect of his peers and the judiciary. This award commemorates the service, dignity, professionalism and dedication exemplified by Hampton during her years of practice.

Steve Bertil, a third year law student at the Villanova University Charles Widger School of Law, will receive the Irvin Stander Award. Bertil is being honored for his zeal for academic course work, employment, internships and school activities.

The Section will recognize Hon. Tina Maria Rago, Workers’ Compensation Office of Adjudication; Hon. Geoffrey Dlin (Ret.) and Megan L. Dougherty for their service as co-chairs of the Section in 2015. Additionally, in celebration of the Section’s 20th anniversary, it will make a donation to Community Partnership School on behalf of the Section and pay tribute to all of the previous Section chairs since its original inception as a committee in 1979.

Lastly, the Arts in the Court subcommittee will unveil the latest painting in a series of paintings commissioned to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the Pennsylvania Workers’ Compensation Act through art.

Doors open for a pre-event reception at 11:30 a.m. at The Logan, One Logan Square, Philadelphia, Pa. 19103. Tickets are $55 for section members and $65 for non-members. For more information or to register, visit PhiladelphiaBar.org.
Freshman City Councilmembers Outline Plans for Upcoming Terms

By Lauren A. Strebel

A large freshman class joined the ranks of Philadelphia City Council this term and they are ready to hit the ground running. During the City Policy Committee meeting on March 7, new council members Allan Domb, Derek Green, Helen Gym, Cherelle Parker and Al Taubenberger discussed some of their initiatives on how to tackle the biggest issues facing Philadelphia today.

The City of Philadelphia has one statistic that the councilmembers want to expel – Philly has the highest poverty level for a big city in the U.S. One solution – increase the number of venues where small businesses can obtain loans. Green intends to talk to banks and city depositories with the ability provide small businesses with the capital they need to flourish. He also wants to add public banking to the discussion, seeing as other jurisdictions are using this alternative to provide small businesses with public-lending opportunities.

It is also very important to make sure Philadelphians, themselves, are employable. A program titled The Choice is Yours (TCY) is designed to provide first-time nonviolent felony drug offenders with an opportunity to have their criminal records expunged after graduating from the program. Since 2012, 187 participants have gone through TCY. Taubenberger highlighted Philadelphia Opportunity Industry (OIC) that provides job training and educational programs to disadvantaged Philadelphians who need help getting jobs or advancing in their careers. With continued support from the city, TCY and OIC can help get and keep Philadelphians employed so they can contribute to the city's growth.

Gym highlighted some initiatives on her radar, such as youth homelessness, oversight of public institutions, protecting homeowners and education. It is important for the council to monitor public institutions to make sure they are fulfilling their responsibilities to the public. It will also be important for the city to negotiate with the federal government in protecting homeowners' rights. Among the issues with Philadelphia's education system, presently there are 184 teacher vacancies in the school district and a shortage of counselors and nurses. These vacancies need to be filled so each child has the opportunity to get the attention they require during their schooling.

It will be important to find sound solutions to improve the city's long-term fiscal health. In doing so, there are tough issues to tackle. Parker noted, such as the pension crisis. She believes in putting data-driven solutions to tough issues to tackle, Parker noted, such as the pension crisis. She believes in putting data-driven solutions to work. The city will also need to “expand the pie” and possibly consider additional revenue streams like the soda tax. Chancellor Gaetan J. Alfano asked the councilmembers if the city can make its voices heard, all the way to Harrisburg. It is important for the Association to reach out and engage in tough conversations, since there are few other entities that can move the needle the way lawyers and law firms can and do.

Going forward, the council intends to work within the constraints it is under to make smart municipal policy and change the narrative. Part of changing the narrative will involve altering the mentality about what poverty is and who bares the cost. It is a challenging dialogue and will involve spreading the wealth. The freshman councilmembers are ready to start the conversation.

How can the Philadelphia Bar Association help? Members can make their voices heard, all the way to Harrisburg. It is important for the Association to reach out and engage in tough conversations, since there are few other entities that can move the needle the way lawyers and law firms can and do.

Lauren A. Strebel (LStrebel@lssh-law.com), an associate at Langsam Stevens Silver & Hollander LLP, is an associate editor of the Philadelphia Bar Reporter.
LEGAL RIGHTS OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES COMMITTEE

Helping Disabled Individuals Locate Adequate Accommodations

By Enrique Marquez

Throughout the United States, families in the lower end of the income spectrum face the difficulty of locating adequate housing that they can afford. Those same families that have one or more disabled individuals in the household face an even greater obstacle in locating adequate accommodations. One organization in Pennsylvania is fighting to make this reality easier for those families.

Regional Housing Legal Services (RHLS) is a non-profit law firm that provides services that advocate for the development of affordable and safe housing for underserved populations in Pennsylvania. Patricia McGarvey, trial attorney, Office of the Regional Counsel, Region III, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, spoke about her organization’s work through the RHLS to the Legal Rights of Persons with Disabilities Committee at their meeting on March 1.

RHLS accomplishes this through direct representation of non-profit developers and policy change, among other remedies. A major driver behind these developments is the Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC), that RHLS is able to counsel their clients on. The LIHTC is a federal tax credit program that is governed by rules at the federal and state levels and provides incentives to developers of affordable rental housing. The incentive is a dollar-for-dollar reduction in the developer’s federal income taxes earned for 10 years from the date that the qualifying housing is placed in the market. The credit is allocated to the development and the developer can then market those credits to investors who contribute to the project. Those contributions are used as equity in the development’s financing plan.

In Pennsylvania, the Pennsylvania Housing and Finance Agency (PHFA) is responsible for designating the allocation of the credits. As required by law, the PHFA adopts a Qualified Allocation Plan that details the requirements and criteria necessary for obtaining the LIHTC. The competition is fierce for those trying to obtain the credit, and in 2016 the PHFA expects to award only 40 applicants the benefit of the credit. The process a developer must go through in seeking the benefit of the credit is an arduous one, and it is recommended that the developer seek the advice of services such as those provided by RHLS.

Another significant way RHLS is able to advocate for housing developments for underserved populations is through its policy work. As a result of their advocacy for policy change, the PHFA enacted key changes to their Qualified Allocation Plan for the benefit of these vulnerable populations. These changes have provided incentives to designate a number of these credits to the lowest-income persons with disabilities. One of the incentives includes a 130 percent basis boost (i.e., amount of the investment for tax purposes) for supportive housing developments that can translate into additional investor contributions per development.

There is critical need for housing developments for vulnerable populations. In 2013, there were 426,410 Pennsylvania households (families of four) living on less than $20,391 per year. The National Low Income Housing Coalition ascertained a shortage of 275,466 affordable units for these low-income households. However, housing equipped with the necessary support services for disabled persons are in even greater need. In this fight, RHLS will continue to serve in the forefront to make these numbers a thing of the past.

Enrique Marquez (enrique.marquez@phila.gov) is an assistant city solicitor for the City of Philadelphia.

FEDERAL COURTS COMMITTEE

Michael A. Morse (left) and Leslie A. Mariotti (right), co-chairs, Federal Courts Committee, flanking (left to right) Hon. Mark A. Kearney, U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania; Hon. Timothy J. Savage, U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania; and Hon. Mitchell S. Goldberg, U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania; at the Committee’s meeting on March 16.

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For details on placing a Lawyer to Lawyer referral ad, contact Lana Ehrlich at 215-557-2392 or lehrlich@alm.com.
Good Sports for a Great Cause

By Steven E. Bizar

And do as adversaries do in law – strive mightily, but eat and drink as friends.”

-William Shakespeare, The Taming of the Shrew: Act 1, Scene 2

One of the great benefits of membership and active participation in the collegial associations of our profession is the opportunity to develop friendships among our peers and competitors. Both the Philadelphia Bar Foundation and the Philadelphia Bar Association promote collegiality and civility within our legal community while also discharging important public responsibilities.

The Foundation offers a yearly occasion where attorneys can use sports as a vehicle to strive mightily as adversaries and then eat and drink as friends. On Monday, June 20, 2016, the Foundation will host its 28th Annual Golf & Tennis Classic at Waynesborough Country Club in Paoli, Pa. I hope you will join your friends and colleagues at the golf and tennis event for Philadelphia’s legal community and help support legal services for those in need.

The Golf & Tennis Classic provides a fun and important way to fulfill our role as public citizens, contributing to increasing access to the legal system for those in need while also affording each of us an opportunity to deepen relationships that can strengthen the observance of courtesy and civility within our profession. We cannot do these things sitting in our law offices or in the daily course of our labors. We must take advantage of the chance to come together for a fun day as friendly golf and tennis rivals.

Civility in the legal profession — and in our society at large — has become a crucial subject. Inattention to this issue increases the risk that winning “at all costs” and incivility will become the rule, not the exception. As stated in Pennsylvania’s Code of Civility, “[t]he hallmark of an enlightened and effective system of justice is the adherence to standards of professional responsibility and civility.”

The Preamble to the Pennsylvania Rules of Professional Conduct also emphasizes that, because “the legal profession is largely self-governing,” it carries “special responsibilities.” These duties include “the lawyer’s obligation zealously to protect and pursue a client’s legitimate interests, within the bounds of the law, while maintaining a professional, courteous and civil attitude toward all persons involved in the legal system.” In addition, “[a]s a public citizen, a lawyer should seek improvement of the law, access to the legal system, the administration of justice and the quality of service rendered by the legal profession.”

Respect, dignity and courtesy are the foundation of civility in our profession as they are in good sportsmanship. Our individual and collective reputations in the community and the long-term viability of the legal system should take priority over any single disputed issue. This is equally true whether competing on the golf course, the tennis court or in a court of law.

I learned about the importance of civility when I moved to Philadelphia at the end of my fourth year of practicing law. As a litigation associate at a large New York law firm, civility figured far less prominently in my thinking than crushing our clients’ adversarialities. However, I recall that, after a particularly contentious round of discovery sanctions motions, Judge Reed called all counsel into his chambers at the Federal Courthouse for a “sit down” and gave us a stern lecture on what it meant to be a lawyer practicing in Philadelphia — the special responsibility of civility and collegiality that came with our positions. I have heard his words in my mind on many occasions since.

The Foundation has added several features related to these issues at this year’s Golf & Tennis Classic. The day will include a CLE program, offered in conjunction with Philadelphia Bar Association CLE, on the topic of “Attorney Ethics Found in Golf and Tennis.” Golf and tennis participants will also enjoy lots of networking throughout the day at the lovely Waynesborough Country Club facilities — in the morning, at lunch, during play and at the reception and dinner.

We will also form “The Justice League” to amp up the level of friendly competition. All golf and tennis players will be part of teams in four divisions within The Justice League. In conjunction with The Legal Intelligencer, lighthearted social media posts every week will foster collegiality, competition and public appreciation during the months leading up to the event itself.

Together with Chancellor Gaetan J. Alfano, I have invited special participation in the Golf & Tennis Classic from the firms and companies associated with former Chancellors and Foundation presidents as well as the various sections and committees of the Association. The firms and companies will participate as Hole Sponsors, while Association members will represent their sections and committees by playing as golf foursomes or tennis teams.

In all of these ways, the Foundation hopes to foster a unique experience at what is already an enjoyable summer charitable event. By coming together, we can provide philanthropic support for access to justice while nurturing friendships and promoting greater civility within our profession.

I urge you to join us. You can register online for the 28th Annual Golf & Tennis Classic. Visit the Foundation website at www.philabarfoundation.org.

Thank you for your continued support of the Philadelphia Bar Foundation.

Steven E. Bizar (steven.bizar@dechert.com), a partner at Dechert LLP, is president of the Philadelphia Bar Foundation.

For more information, please visit www.philabarfoundation.org.

Donation Opportunity

Contributing to the Philadelphia Bar Foundation shows you care about our justice system and the assistance it provides to the community. With one contribution you are supporting all the public interest legal organizations in the Philadelphia area that serve those who need a lawyer to help them assert their legal rights but who cannot afford one. For more information, please visit www.philabarfoundation.org.

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PRO BONO SPOTLIGHT - GOOD SHEPHERD MEDIATION PROGRAM

Converting Conflict to Resolution in Fractious Families

By Hon. Stephanie H. Klein (ret.)

When I became a mediator and arbitrator after retiring from the judiciary, I decided not to do family law cases because of many years of experience with family law. Instead I decided to focus my ADR practice on employment, real estate, commercial and personal injury.

As a mediator, however, I became interested in elder and estate law cases, particularly because of disputes I experienced with my own family. I trained as an elder law mediator with Good Shepherd Mediation Program, and eagerly accepted an assignment to co-mediate an estate case with a more experienced mediator.

Why mediate instead of litigate? Dockets are crowded and may take months or even years to try. Judges may lack the time and patience to resolve hotly contested cases that may involve small amounts of money or personal property.

More importantly, obstacles to resolving estate disputes may originate in decades of conflict. When the comedian Tommy Smothers ended each comedy routine with his brother Dickie, “Mom always liked you best,” we laughed uneasily as it touched a sensitive chord in all of us, as we all experience deep-seated conflict with siblings, parents and other loved ones. An estate dispute may reveal decades of hurt that pulls scabs off barely healed wounds, rendering communication between parties difficult or even impossible. Failure to resolve these disputes amicably may cause rancor to persist for years, even causing a schism in the next generation.

Mediation offers the possibility of a better process than litigation. It allows all parties a gentler non-adversarial process where all voices may be heard. Mediation is confidential and can be designed to fit the parties’ needs.

Parties are not bound by the rules of evidence, allowing, for example, a brother to express a decades-old jealousy that his brother received the bicycle for Christmas he so ardently desired.

With a skilled mediator, communication can be re-established, allowing parties to understand the interests and concerns that underlie the rigid positions preventing resolution. Airing these feelings allows parties to narrow the issues and interests and to work together in earnest to resolve their dispute.

Mediation of elder and estate cases may increase in the coming years as a result of a new rule issued by the Pennsylvania Supreme Court. Orphans’ Court Rule 1.6 suggests that parties may mediate by agreement, or that county Orphans’ Courts may provide opportunities for parties to mediate privately or through county-supervised programs.

Happily, our case resolved. After a great deal of work by everyone, parties started to communicate. They expressed regret about the years of communication breakdown and estrangement. When the parties were able to reach agreement, they heaved a sigh of relief, smiled and seemed to go home happy. So did my co-mediator and I – quite content to resolve these challenging issues for this family and put this matter to rest.

By Hon. Stephanie H. Klein (ret.) (kleindj@comcast.net) is a mediator and arbitrator with ADR Options, Inc.

QUICK BITES

Malbec Offers the Experience Minus the Overkill

Editor’s Note: Quick Bites is a returning feature that will include reviews of lunch and dinner destinations in Philadelphia.

By James Zwolak

Of the many cutting-edge restaurants that have recently placed Philadelphia squarely on the national culinary map, independent steakhouses would not be at the forefront. Our red meat stalwarts such as the Capital Grille, or the “eat dinner on the drink menu. Far more troubling, Boulevardier – perhaps because it was not proceeded as smoothly. First, our waiter Cuban mojito - was dry and refreshing. My caipirinha – a Brazilian twist on the wines, as well as a few specialty cocktails. The house-made traditional desserts of Philadelphia.

James Zwolak (James.Zwolak@phila.gov) is a divisional deputy city solicitor for the City of Philadelphia.
On March 1, 2016, the Department of Health and Human Services (HHHS) released cost-sharing parameters setting the 2017 maximum annual out-of-pocket limits on non-grandfathered health plans at $7,150 for self-only coverage and $14,300 for coverage other than self-only. These limits take effect for the first plan year on or after Jan. 1, 2017. These limits generally apply with respect to any essential health benefits (EHBs) offered under the group health plan. The final regulations established that starting in the 2016 plan year, the self-only annual limitation on cost sharing applies to each individual, regardless of whether the individual is enrolled in other than self-only coverage, including family coverage. As a reminder, the 2016 maximum annual out-of-pocket limits for all non-grandfathered plans are $6,850 for self-only coverage and $13,700 for coverage other than self-only.

New SBC Template Implementation Announced.

The Departments of Labor (DOL), the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) and Health and Human Services (HHS) (collectively, the Departments) announced through Affordable Care Act (ACA) FAQ 30 that the new Summary of Benefits and Coverage (SBC) template and associated documents, published by the Departments on Feb. 26, 2016, should be used for the open enrollment period that begins on or after April 1, 2017. As background, the ACA requires an SBC to be provided to plan participants at time of enrollment. Significant penalties (up to $1,000) may be imposed for each individual who does not receive this summary. If any material changes are made to the document outside of renewal, the participant must be notified 60 days prior to the effective date of the change. As stated in FAQ 30, the Departments intend to review the comments and finalize the new SBC template and associated documents expeditiously (the comment period closed March 28, 2016). The Departments intend that health plans and issuers that maintain an annual open enrollment period will be required to use the new SBC template and associated documents beginning on the first day of the first open enrollment period that begins on or after April 1, 2017 with respect to coverage for plan years (or, in the individual market, policy years) beginning on or after that date. For plans and issuers that do not use an annual open enrollment period, the new SBC template and associated documents would be required beginning on the first day of the first plan year (or, in the individual market, policy year) that begins on or after April 1, 2017.

Supreme Court Finds State Reporting Law Is Pre-empted by ERISA.

Vermont established an “all payer claims database” that requires insurers, third party administrators (TPAs) of self-funded plans, providers and government agencies to report data on health care costs, prices, quality and use of services to the state to examine health care utilization, expenditures and performance. Seventeen states, including New York and Connecticut, also have or are developing all payer claims databases (although reporting is on a voluntary basis in some states).

The Court found that Vermont’s all payer claims database does not apply to plans subject to ERISA. In the majority opinion, the Court identified reporting as a principal and essential feature of ERISA and plan administration. Vermont’s requirement that ERISA plans report detailed information about the administration of benefits amounts to a direct regulation by the state of a fundamental ERISA function. As such, the Court ruled such state laws are inconsistent with the central design of ERISA — to provide a single uniform national scheme without interference from the laws of the states. Justice Breyer suggested that the DOL could develop a similar reporting requirement to satisfy the states’ needs.

For more information about insurance, visit the Philadelphia Bar Association Insurance Exchange at www.usiaffinityex.com/Philadelphia. For Lawyers’ Professional Liability and other business coverage, you can continue to visit the regular Philadelphia Bar Association Insurance Program website at www.myhealthinsurance.com/philadelphia. If you’d like to talk to someone about insurance and benefits options for Philadelphia Bar Association members, call USI Affinity Benefit Specialists at 1-855-874-0367.

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Brian McLaughlin (Brian.McLaughlin@usiaffinity.com) is vice president of USI Affinity’s Benefit Solutions Group.
Honoring Older Americans, Heroes of Justice

By Karen C. Buck

Imagine a world without the elders of this country – those who fought bravely on foreign shores; in WWII against Nazi brutality and on other harrowing grounds; those who fought racism and discrimination in the civil rights, voting rights and women’s rights movements; and those who blazed trails for all of us. Advocates who through the last half-century have helped raise their voices for justice, for diversity and for their communities, who helped enrich the legal profession and the world at large.

On Wednesday, May 4, SeniorLAW Center will honor remarkable older Americans and advocates for elder justice at the 2016 SeniorLAW Center Gala at The Crystal Tea Room, chaired by Rochelle M. Fedullo and past Chancellor William P. Fedullo. It is a fitting reflection of our work, as SeniorLAW Center celebrates more than 35 years of proudly representing, educating and advocating for over 5,000 elders each year, fighting elder abuse, homelessness, exploitation and poverty.

Join SeniorLAW Center to say thank you to these extraordinary leaders in the community, each over the age of 60, who continue to be inspiring in “the third age” of life. These are SeniorLAW Center’s 2016 6 Over 60 Award winners:

- Nolan N. Atkinson, Esq.
- Geneva A. Black
- Chief Justice Ronald D. Castille (ret.)
- Robert C. Heim, Esq.
- The Honorable Sandra Mazer Moss (ret.)
- The Senior Veterans Advisory Corps

In 2016, these leaders will be inducted into the SeniorLAW Center Hall of Fame, a prestigious group of founders and enduring champions for its mission and organization:

- Ronald J. Shaffer, Esq.
- Paul S. Buck and Arthur R. Ciocco, VISIONaries
- The Pennsylvania Supreme Court’s Elder Law Task Force - 2016 Partner of the Year

SeniorLAW Center hopes you will join to celebrate the contributions of these remarkable individuals and the work of SeniorLAW Center on May 4. For tickets and sponsorship opportunities, to honor one of the remarkable individuals above and to learn about pro bono opportunities, visit www.seniorlawcenter.org.

Karen C. Buck (KBuck@SeniorLAWCenter.org) is the executive director of the SeniorLAW Center.
Registration is now open for team and individual entries for the 37th Philadelphia Bar Association Charity Run benefiting the Support Center for Child Advocates, to be held on Sunday, May 15, 2016 at Memorial Hall in Fairmount Park. Online registration for individuals is now open through May 13 (www.runtheday.com) and the deadline for mail-in registration forms (download at www.phillybarcharityrun.com) is May 5. Legal Team competition applications may be obtained from Michael Berkowitz at Caesar Rivise, PC at (215) 567-2010 or mjberkowitz@caesar.law. The deadline for receiving team registrations is Friday, May 6, 2016.

The event includes a five-kilometer (3.1-mile) race and a five-kilometer walk. Anyone may run or walk as an individual in the Open Competition. Members of the Philadelphia Bar Association will be included, at no extra charge, in the Bar Competition in addition to the Open Competition. There will also be a free 20-yard non-competitive dash for children 5-10 years old, sponsored by Buchanan Ingersoll & Rooney PC. Registration for the kids’ dash will be on the day of the event.

The entry fee for the Open and Bar Association Competitions is $35, if registrations are postmarked by midnight May 5, 2016; if you register in person between May 12-13; or if you register at www.runtheday.com/registration/select_race_type/24009 by midnight on May 13. A service fee is added for online registrations. Pre-registration is encouraged. The entry fee on the day of the event increases to $45.

You can register in person at the office of Caesar Rivise, PC, 1635 Market St., 12th Floor, Philadelphia, Pa. 19103 from May 12-13 between 9 a.m.–5 p.m.

The Philadelphia Bar Association is being joined as a corporate level sponsor this year by FirsTrust; Buchanan Ingersoll & Rooney PC; Caesar Rivise, PC; Philadelphia Runner; The Legal Intelligencer; Veritext; USI Affinity; Run the Day; and Wawa.

In addition, to date, the following law firms have signed on as legal sponsors: Anapol Weiss; Baker & Hostetler LLP; Clark Hill PLC; Cozen O’Connor; DLA Piper LLP (US); Drinker Biddle & Reath LLP; Feldman, Shepherd, Wohlgelernter, Tanner, Weinstock & Dodig, LLP; Fox Rothschild LLP; Pepper Hamilton LLP; Sandals & Associates, PC.; and Stevens & Lee/Griffin. Joining this year as legal supporters are: Offit Kurman; and Zarwin Baum De Vita Kaplan Schaer Toddy PC.

If you would like to have your firm listed as a legal sponsor or legal supporter, call Manny Pokotilow at (215) 567-2010.

Please encourage your friends and family to participate in this year’s Philadelphia Bar Association 5K Charity Run/Walk to benefit the Support Center for Child Advocates.
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Federal Reserve Chair Janet Yellen’s congressional testimony surfaced a phrase not heard in U.S. economy circles for years: “negative interest rates.” The prospect of negative rates — when the central bank charges its depositors a fee to hold some of their money instead of paying interest on that money — is not as far-fetched as it once was. For this month’s interview, I sat down with Keith Eby, senior investment advisor with PNC Wealth Management in Philadelphia, to discuss the possibility, as unlikely as it may be, of below-zero interest rates in the U.S.

Mary Ashenbrenner (MA): What does it mean to have negative interest rates?

Keith Eby (KE): Negative interest rates are getting increased attention following recent moves by central banks in Europe, Japan, Switzerland and Denmark to adopt them as a way to revitalize economic growth and increase inflation. In their simplest form, negative rates would cause banks to pay to keep capital reserves at the Fed, rather than the Fed paying the banks interest as it does now. Yellen recently acknowledged that America’s central bank was taking another look at below-zero rates — after previously considering them in 2010 — in an effort to be prepared should the U.S. economy falter. Although she was quick to point out that a move to negative rates is not the most likely scenario.

MA: Why would the Fed consider such a bold move?

KE: The goal with negative rates is to get banks to make more loans to businesses and consumers. While indications point to a boost in lending in countries that recently took interest rates below zero, it is too early to tell whether they actually will achieve the ultimate goal of supporting economic growth.

MA: What would it take for the Federal Reserve to push rates below zero?

KE: I think it would have to be an actual recession, not just slower growth — and that is pretty unlikely. But even if the U.S. did experience a recession, that would not necessarily mean an automatic move to negative interest rates.

The fundamentals for consumers are solid. We believe these strong fundamentals will be enough to power economic growth through 2016.

Mary E. Ashenbrenner (mary.ashenbrenner@pnc.com or 215-585-1041) is a senior vice president with PNC Wealth Management.

By Mary E. Ashenbrenner

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Attorney General Candidates continued from page 1

consultant, Peters explained that he could relate to other prosecutors, agents and support staff in an effort to boost morale.

On the topic of criminal justice reform, the candidates discussed Gov. Tom Wolf’s execution of expungement legislation that limits access to the records on

HB 1800 continued from page 1

and diminishes the judicial autonomy of the Workers’ Compensation judge as the arbitrator and final fact finder by predetermining the credibility of medical evidence.

“The claimant’s and employer’s compensation bars are unified in opposition to HB 1800. It is an unnecessary attempt to change the delivery of medical treatment to Pennsylvania’s injured workers. It would alter the medical treatment review process that is already provided for and working; and would remove judicial involvement. All the reasons forming the basis for this proposed legislation have been invalidated and Pennsylvania workers’ compensation practitioners from both sides of the aisle view this legislation as unnecessary,” said Eric Pearson, co-chair of the Workers’ Compensation Section.

The Philadelphia Bar Association opposes HB 1800 and any similar legislation and will communicate its position to the Governor, General Assembly and the public and take whatever action is necessary to effectuate this resolution.

To view the complete resolution, visit PhiladelphiaBar.org.

MARCH 2016 NATURALIZATION CEREMONY

Left: Immediate-Past Chancellor Albert S. Dandridge III (left to right); Hon. Gerald A. McHugh, U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania; and Michael J. Carroll, senior attorney, Community Legal Services, at the Naturalization Ceremony sponsored by the Philadelphia Bar Association at the Federal Courthouse on March 17. Above: New U.S. citizens take the Oath of Citizenship at the Naturalization Ceremony. One hundred one people from 41 nations became U.S. citizens at the ceremony.
CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Note: While the following listings have been verified prior to press time, any scheduled event may be subject to change by the committee or section chairs. Lunches are $9 for members and $15 for non-members, unless otherwise indicated. Register online for most events at philadelphiabar.org. Unless otherwise specified, all checks for lunches and programs should be made payable to the Philadelphia Bar Association and mailed to Bar Headquarters, 1101 Market St., 11th Floor, Philadelphia, PA 19107-2955.

April 4
CLE - What Can Be Learned From Experienced Consumers of ADR: 12 p.m., 11th Floor Conference Center. Registration: PhiladelphiaBar.org.
Family Law Section: meeting, 12 p.m., Philadelphia Family Court, 1501 Arch St., 15th Floor, Philadelphia.
Professional Responsibility Committee: meeting, 12:30 p.m., 10th Floor Board Room. Lunch: $9.

April 5
Bar Reporter Editorial Board: meeting, 8:30 a.m., 10th Floor Board Room.
Professional Guidance Committee: meeting (members only), 12 p.m., Duane Morris LLP 30 S. 17th St., Philadelphia.
2016 Spring Quarterly Meeting & Reception: 5:30 p.m., Hyatt at the Bellevue, 200 S. Broad St., Philadelphia. Registration: PhiladelphiaBar.org.

April 6
Delivery of Legal Services Committee: meeting, 8:30 a.m., 10th Floor Board Room.
Criminal Justice Section Executive Committee: meeting, 12:30 p.m., 11th Floor Committee Room South.

April 7
Real Property Executive Committee: meeting, 12 p.m., Ballard Spahr LLP 1735 Market St., 48th Floor. Philadelphia.
CLE - Compensation Issues for Portfolio Companies: 12:30 p.m., 11th Floor Conference Center. Registration: PhiladelphiaBar.org.

April 8
Zoning, Land Use & Code Enforcement Committee: meeting, 12 p.m., 11th Floor Conference Center. Lunch: $9.
Philadelphia Lawyer Editorial Board: meeting, 12:30 p.m., 11th Floor Committee Room South.

April 11
Civil Rights Committee: meeting, 12 p.m., 10th Floor Board Room. Lunch: $9.

April 12
Business Law Executive Committee: meeting, 12 p.m., Reed Smith LLP, Three Logan Square, 1717 Arch St., Philadelphia.
Law Firm Pro Bono Committee: meeting, 12 p.m., Blank Rome LLP, One Logan Square, 130 N. 18th St., Philadelphia.
Business Law Section & YLD Speed Mentoring Event: 5:30 p.m., Reed Smith LLP, Three Logan Square, 1717 Arch St., Philadelphia. Registration: PhiladelphiaBar.org.

April 13
APABA-PA Board: meeting, 12 p.m., 11th Floor Conference Room South.
Elder Law & Guardianship Committee: 12 p.m., 11th Floor Conference Center. Lunch: $9.

April 14
Section and Division Chairs: meeting, 8:30 a.m., 10th Floor Board Room.
Foundation Board: meeting, 12 p.m., 10th Floor Board Room.
Legislative Liaison Committee: meeting, 12 p.m., 11th Floor Conference Room South. Lunch: $9.

April 15
Martha Hampton Award Luncheon: 11:30 a.m., The Logan, One Logan Square, Philadelphia. Registration: PhiladelphiaBar.org.

April 18
Social Security Disability Benefits Committee: meeting, 12 p.m., 11th Floor Conference Center. Lunch: $9.

April 21
Family Law Section Executive Committee: meeting, 12 p.m., 11th Floor Conference Room South.

April 22
CLE - Voting Rights: Where We Came From & Where We Are Going: 12 p.m., 11th Floor Conference Center. Registration: PhiladelphiaBar.org.
Labor and Employment Law Committee: meeting, 12 p.m., 10th Floor Board Room. Lunch: $9.

April 25
YLD Executive Committee: meeting, 12 p.m., 10th Floor Board Room.

April 26
Women in the Profession Committee: meeting, 12 p.m., 10th Floor Board Room. Lunch: $9.
CLE - Technology Issues for Small and Midsize Law Firms: 12:30 p.m., 11th Floor Conference Center. Registration: PhiladelphiaBar.org.

April 27
Government and Public Service Lawyers Committee: meeting, 12 p.m., 10th Floor Board Room. Lunch: $9.
LGBT Rights Committee: meeting, 12 p.m., 11th Floor Committee Room South.

April 28
LRIS Committee: meeting, 12 p.m., 11th Floor Conference Room South.
Board of Governors: meeting, 4 p.m., 10th Floor Board Room.

April 29
CLE - The Making of a Murderer: 2 p.m., 11th Floor Conference Center. Registration: PhiladelphiaBar.org.

April 30
CLE - Bridge the Gap: 9 a.m., 11th Floor Conference Center. Registration: PhiladelphiaBar.org.

Send Bar Association-related calendar items 30 days in advance to Thomas E. Rogers, Senior Managing Editor, Philadelphia Bar Reporter, Philadelphia Bar Association, 1101 Market St., Philadelphia, Pa., 19107-2955. Fax: (215) 238-1159. Email: TRogers@philabar.org.
Philadelphia Bar.org April 2016 Philadelphia Bar Reporter

Joseph A. Prim, principal of the Prim Law Firm, recently led a panel discussion on “Impairment Rating Evaluations in Workers’ Compensation Matters” for the Barbieri Inn of Court.

Pamela Coyle Brecht, partner at Pietragallo Gordon Alfano Bosick & Raspanti, LLP, will present at the 20th Annual Compliance Institute in Las Vegas, Nev. She will speak on “Managed Care Fraud: Enforcement and Compliance” on Tuesday, April 19.

Kathleen D. Wilkinson, partner at Wilson Elser Moskowitz Edelman & Dicker LLP, was appointed by the Pennsylvania Supreme Court to serve on the Board of Law Examiners for a three-year term commencing April 1, 2016.

Niki T. Ingram, shareholder at Marshall Dennehey Warner Coleman & Goggin, P.C., was named a Fellow of the College of Workers’ Compensation Lawyers during the American Bar Association’s 2016 Workers’ Compensation Midwinter Seminar and Conference, held March 11–12 in New Orleans, La.

Anthony Kyriakakis, of counsel to Dilworth Paxson LLP, has joined the Board of Trustees of the University of the Arts.

David S. Blum, partner at Montgomery McCraken Walker & Rhoads LLP, was presented by the Drexel University Thomas R. Kline School of Law Diversity Award on March 2.

Tracey McDevitt Hagan, partner at Reilly, Janiczek, McDevitt, Henrich & Childen, P.C., and Daniel La Luz, associate at Pepper Hamilton LLP, assisted a mother participating in Reentry Court to enroll her son in St. Malachi Catholic School and arranged for full scholarships for his first and second years.

Matthew D. Lee, partner at Blank Rome LLP, received the 2016 Pennsylvania Legal Aid Network (PLAN) Excellence Award on March 15 in Harrisburg, Pa.

“People” highlights news of members’ awards, honors or appointments of a community or civic nature. Send news to Thomas E. Rogers, Senior Managing Editor, Philadelphia Bar Reporter, Philadelphia Bar Association, 1101 Market St., 11th fl., Philadelphia, Pa., 19107-2955 or reporter@philabar.org.

Duffy + Partners congratulates its founder, Tom Duffy, on being named LAWYER OF THE YEAR for PERSONAL INJURY LITIGATION in Philadelphia.

For more than three decades, the Best Lawyers lists have been compiled from peer-review surveys. The 2016 edition includes over 55,000 attorneys in 50 states.

However, only ONE lawyer in each metropolitan area is granted the distinction of being named “Lawyer of the Year” for a specific practice area, and it is based entirely on receiving the highest peer ratings.

Louis A. Petroni has been elected Chairman of Montgomery McCraken Walker & Rhoads LLP. Petroni succeeds Richard L. Scheff, who held the position since 2009 and led the firm through a period of expansion in the New York and Philadelphia markets. Petroni has been with Montgomery McCraken for more than three decades and recently served as the firm’s vice-chairman and executive partner, and as co-chair of the business department. Petroni worked alongside of Scheff on strategic planning, client development and overall firm management.
FOR MORE THAN 30 YEARS, Sidney L. Gold & Associates, P.C. has dedicated its practice to the field of employment law and civil rights litigation. The firm’s attorneys take great pride in serving as both aggressive and compassionate advocates for victims of unlawful discrimination and harassment. As a result, the Martindale-Hubbell® Bar Register has certified Sidney L. Gold & Associates as a pre-eminent law firm in the field of labor and employment law. More than 4,500 lawyers throughout Pennsylvania and New Jersey look to Sidney L. Gold & Associates to refer their clients.

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Sidney L. Gold & Associates is proud of its skilled attorneys and is honored by the recognition Super Lawyers® has bestowed upon this year’s recipients.

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